

**Minutes of WDM RAC Meeting – 17 March, 2009**  
**Moonie Cross Road Roadhouse, Moonie**

meeting commenced at 9:30am

**1. Chairman's Welcome and Confirmation of Agenda**

The Chairman opened the meeting and welcomed the members and guests.

**2. Attendance**

N. Boland (Chairman), J. Crocker, M. Duffield, C. Nason, V. French, P. Banks, J. Sturgess,  
G. Rennick

Nominees: D. Poulsen (QDPI), R. Taylor (GRDC), L. McIntyre (CSIRO), D. Scanlan (GRFL)

Guests: P. Grieve (QDPI), B. Pengelly (CSIRO)

Co-ordinator: N. Jensen

**3. Apologies**

E. Hill, A-M. Bach, A. Borrell, M. Dieters

The co-ordinator reported that A. Coleborn and D. Hemming had resigned from the Committee.

**4. Confirmation of Agenda**

Confirmed

**5. Confirmation of Minutes (15 August, 2008)**

Confirmed

**6. Business from Minutes**

6.1. Northern Region RAC Coordination Arrangements for 2008-11

Co-ordinator's report received.

RAC members questioned whether the splitting the coordination of the Northern Region committees between the States was a sign that the Northern Panel would also fragment.

6.2. Letter to / from CSIRO regarding wheat germplasm licensing arrangements

Correspondence noted and Dr McIntyre provided an update.

6.3. Industry Sorghum Midge Rating Scheme

Co-ordinator's report received.

6.4. NR RAC Chair's Meeting with NP GRDC held 25th August 08 at PBI Narrabri NSW

Chairman's report received.

6.5. NVT Review

It was noted that the NVT Review report had not been released but that J. Juttner (GRDC) had prepared some notes for the RACs (tabled). Discussion followed. The Committee requested that information be obtained about how the NVT Advisory Committees would be selected.

6.6. Staffing of QDPI Office in Miles

Dr Poulsen reported to the meeting.

6.7. National RD&E Framework

Dr Grieve reported to the meeting.

Concern was expressed that grain growers need some way to engage in the discussion about the National Framework, especially since approaches and production systems are different in the Northern Region compared to other regions.

6.8. Review of QDPIF Grains Research Facilities (Fresh Approach)

Dr Grieve reported to the meeting.

## **7. Correspondence and Business**

- 7.1. QDPIF Field Crops Performance Report 2007-08  
Report noted.
- 7.2. Extension of RAC membership term to September 09  
Noted
- 7.3. Wheat Variety Guide (WVG)  
Correspondence to/from QDPI noted.  
Data presented in the WVG comes from a number of sources, but most of it is NVT data.  
QDPI and GRDC are in negotiations to have some disease screening done by QDPI.
- 7.4. QDPI&F wheat variety testing capacity  
Correspondence to/from QDPI noted.  
QDPI has transitioned its wheat breeding activities to AGT (QDPI now only engages in “pre-breeding”). Under the terms of the agreement with AGT, QDPI had agreed to provide wheat variety testing services to AGT for one year as AGT made transition arrangements.  
Running extensive trials on a fee-for-service basis is not part of QDPI’s core business.
- 7.5. Biloela seed repository  
Mainly a repository for pasture seed. QDPI is still considering what to do with the seed repository in a National context. The repository is operating as normal until decisions are made about a National Plant Genetic Resources center.
- 7.6. Roma Research Station  
No change since Minister Mulherin’s letter of 9 May, 2009.
- 7.7. Barley Breeding Australia Review  
Review process noted.  
C. Nason and N. Boland agreed to participate in a Northern Region BBA Review consultative group.
- 7.8. Feed value of sorghum  
Research projects noted. Information provided by Dr John L Black was distributed to RAC members prior to the meeting.

## **8. RAC members’ reports**

RAC members reported to the meeting. Comments included:

- stripe rust is an issue, but the spraying strategies coming out of the south are too simplistic
- crown rot is a serious problem in the region, more so than on the Eastern Downs since sorghum rotations are less of an option
- there had been a good uptake of detector spray units in the region, although a few had experienced problems
- an increase in stored grain pests was flagged as an emerging issue (large volumes of grain stored on-farm)
- in response to industry demand, trials had been done on barley sowing depth. Although more work needs to be done, there were differences in variety responses, but some varieties could be planted as deeply as 15cm in alluvial soils with little effect on yield.
- fleabane continued to be a problem weed. Native millet and feathertop rhodes were also a problem.

Dr Poulsen (QDPI nominee) reported to the meeting and noted that a comprehensive written report would be provided by QDPI to the RACs.

## **9. Guest Speaker**

Dr B. Pengelly reported on the Southern Queensland Farming Systems Project.

## **10. Review of priority issues for Western Downs and Maranoa Region**

The WDM priority issues were reviewed and updated.

## **11. RAC nominees' reports**

Dr McIntyre reported to the meeting and a written CSIRO report was distributed to members before the meeting.

Dr Dieters provided a written report for the meeting.

Mr Taylor reported to the meeting.

- the Northern Panel commissioned the Fellowes report on industry structure and is putting together an industry plan and exploring options for R&D for coming decades
- GRDC Advisor updates have been well received, but not quite as good for growers.
- 50% of NVT Review submissions came from the north.
- GRDC is supporting breeding programs in the north.

Mr Scanlan reported to the meeting

- GRFL Director Moloney had resigned when he moved interstate. John Obst had accepted a position as an independent director on the GRFL Board.
- GRFL representatives had met with Minister Burke to discuss the level of expenditure on grains research and industry structure.
- GRFL is functioning well, but investments have performed in line with recent downwards trends.
- RACs will be reselected when the current term finishes at the end of the year.

## **12. Next meeting**

Date: 18 August, 2009 (to be confirmed)

Venue: Toowoomba

Speakers: TBD; Marianne Banziger (dryland maize breeding).

## **13. Closure**

Meeting closed at 4:00pm